

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009

Remarks at a Question-and-Answer Session With Members of the International Olympic Committee in Copenhagen, Denmark

October 2, 2009

[The question-and-answer session is joined in progress.]

Patrick G. Ryan. The next question relates to—comes from Mr. Ali, and thank you for the question. How do we intend to deal with all of the millions of people who will enter? And I'd like Lori Healey to answer that question, please.

Lori T. Healey. Thank you, and thank you for the question. We are very fortunate, as evidenced by the presence of the President and the First Lady here today, to have a terrifically strong partnership with the Federal Government in Washington. We've worked very closely with the U.S. State Department. Secretary Clinton has also been a very good partner and has worked to assure everyone the full cooperation of the Federal Government. Additionally, in June, the White House announced the formation of the Office of Olympic, Paralympic, and Youth Sport that will act as the coordinating agency if we are so privileged to be selected for the right to host the games, to put all the forces of the Federal Government behind that.

Mr. Ryan. If President Obama would like to add to that, please.

The President. First, emphasize what Lori said in response to Mr. Ali's question. One of the legacies I want to see coming out of the Chicago 2016 hosting of the games is a reminder that America at its best is open to the world. And as has already been indicated, we are putting the full force of the White House and the State Department to make sure that not only is this a successful games, but that visitors from all around the world feel welcome and will come away with a sense of the incredible diversity of the American people.

And I'm very impressed with part of the presentation that we made matching up host families for the athletes who are going to be there, because, as I said, Chicago, we've got everybody. This could be a meeting in Chicago, because we look like the world. And I think that over the last several years, sometimes that fundamental truth about the United States has been lost. And one of the legacies, I think, of this Olympics Games in Chicago would be a restoration of that understanding of what the United States is all about, and the United States recognition of how we are linked to the world.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:51 a.m. in the Bella Center. In his remarks, he referred to Syed Shahid Ali, member, International Olympic Committee. Participating in the question-and-answer session were Patrick G. Ryan, chairman and chief executive officer, and Lori T. Healey, president, Chicago 2016. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : International Olympic Committee members, question-and-answer session in Copenhagen, Denmark.

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